

REMARKS

In the present Amendment, the preamble of claim 1 has been amended to recite an “electrically conductive paste.” Accordingly, the preambles of all of the claims that depend from claim 1 have been amended to recite an “electrically conductive paste.” Support for these amendments is found, for example, on pages 1 and 16 of the present specification.

Claims 7 and 23 have been amended to depend from independent claim 1.

Support for claim 24 is found, for example, on page 12 of the present specification.

No new matter has been added, and entry of the Amendment is respectfully requested.

After entry of the Amendment, claims 1 and 4-24 will be pending.

I. REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102 ~ NIIHARA

Claims 1, 8-15 and 22-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0005406 (“Niihara”).

Applicants traverse and request the Examiner to reconsider in view of the amendment to the claims and the following remarks.

Niihara does not disclose or render obvious the electrically conductive paste according to present claim 1.

The electrically conductive paste according to amended claim 1 may be used, for example, for printing on a base material. Because of the form of the electrically conductive paste, a reduction reaction occurs, thereby allowing the silver particles to be mutually fused. Thus, when the electrically conductive paste according to present claim 1 is used, an electrically conductive coating which has a large thickness and a low volume resistivity can be obtained.

In contrast, Niihara discloses a technology that is similar to a silver mirror test. That is, in the solution, by vibrating the silver particles as the original substance, or by heating the silver particles, the silver particles are ionized, and the ionized silver particles are attached to the base material. In Niihara, because the ionized silver particles are attached to the base material, it is difficult to obtain a large coating thickness, and therefore, only a small coating thickness can be obtained. Furthermore, the volume resistivity becomes high.

As described above, the electrically conductive paste according to amended claim 1 is a technology that is distinguishable from that of Niihara.

Moreover, Niihara uses ethanol as the reducing agent. When a composition (employing a reducing agent having a reducing force as small as ethanol) is used for printing on a base material, even if the reduction reaction occurs, the silver particles can be hardly mutually fused. Therefore, in Niihara, a low volume resistivity of the coating cannot be obtained.

Accordingly, *at least* for the reasons noted above, the electrically conductive paste according to amended claim 1 is distinguishable from the disclosure of Niihara.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the §102 rejection of claims 1, 8-15 and 22-23 based on Niihara.

II. REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 4-6, 16-18 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Niihara in view of U.S. Patent No. 2,560,151 ("Bergo-Heineman").

In addition, Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Bergo-Heineman.

Further, Claims 19 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Niihara in view of Bergo-Heineman, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4, 206,017 ("Robillard").

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

Claims 4-6, 7 and 16-20 are patentable over the cited references, *at least* by virtue of their dependency and the additional elements recited therein.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the above-mentioned §103 rejections.

III. CONCLUSION

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

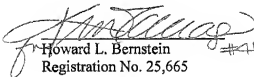
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